



**MINUTES OF THE ELECTORS' GENERAL MEETING, HELD AT THE TOWN HALL ON MONDAY, 1 FEBRUARY 2016 COMMENCING AT 6.35PM.**

**1. OPENING OF MEETING**

***Present***

Mayor J O'Neill	Presiding Member
Cr C Collinson	
Cr J Harrington	(To 8.35pm)
Cr A McPhail	
Cr M McPhail	
Cr D Nardi	
Cr L Nicholson	
Cr A Watkins	
Cr A White	

Mr G Clark	Acting Chief Executive Officer
Mr L Mainwaring	Executive Manager Finance and Administration
Mr J Douglas	Manager Planning Services
Ms S Cocks	Principal Environmental Health Officer
Ms J May	Minute Secretary

There were 13 members of the public in the gallery at the commencement of the meeting.

**2. WELCOME TO GALLERY AND INTRODUCTION OF ELECTED MEMBERS AND STAFF**

Mayor O'Neill welcomed members of the public and introduced elected members and staff.

**3. APOLOGIES**

Nil.

**4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS ANNUAL MEETING OF ELECTORS**

**Moved Cr Harrington, seconded Mrs Newton**

**That the Minutes of the Electors' Meeting held on 1 February 2015 be received. CARRIED**

**5. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

**5.1 *Contents of the Annual Report***

Ms Rico expressed her disappointment with the new format of the annual report which no longer contained detailed information from the previous year's events from each department.

The Acting CEO advised that it had been decided to update the Annual Report to reflect best practice by reporting on Council's progress in respect to its adopted strategic goals throughout the year rather than operational matters.

Mayor O'Neill acknowledged the presence of former Cr Rico at tonight's meeting.

**Moved M McPhail, seconded Cr Harrington**

**That the 2014-2015 Annual Report be received. CARRIED**

**5.2 *General Business***



- **Woodside Hospital Site**

Ms O'Neill (8 Irwin Street) expressed concern with the future development of the Woodside Hospital site and in particular the large significant trees located in the Fortescue Street frontage. She urged Council to take immediate steps to have these protected, if that protection was not already in place.

The Manager Planning Services advised that the hospital building was heritage listed however the grounds were not and given the proposed future subdivision of the site, he shared her concern regarding the retention of these trees.

Ms O'Neill expressed her disappointment that over 10 years ago, Council had planned to embark on the compilation of a Tree Register for the protection of significant trees within the Town and encouraged Council to take steps to put measures in place.

The Acting CEO explained the difficulties in adopting measures to enforce the protection of trees in private property.

Mayor O'Neill advised that Ms O'Neill's concerns regarding the protection of trees on the Woodside Hospital site would be considered at the March Council Meeting.

- **Corporate Business Plan - Streetscapes**

Ms Leahy (33 Fortescue Street) noted that the issue of streetscapes which included urban forestry was listed in Council's Corporate Business Plan and asked what progress Council had made on this issue. She cited information from a 2014 study that East Fremantle's tree canopy was only 10-20% and its hard stand proportion was over 50%. She urged Council to take immediate action to increase its tree canopy using native species and reduce the amount of existing hard stand within the Town.

The Acting CEO advised that Council had been able to include five out of six of the community's priorities in its Corporate Business Plan. The sixth, Streetscapes, which included the issue of tree canopies as part of climate change adaptation was intended to be addressed in the next financial year.

Mayor O'Neill assured the gallery that Council was completely committed to the planting of suitable trees and increase canopy coverage to reduce "hot spots", identification of local endangered fauna and other climate change adaptation measures.

- **East Fremantle Oval**

Mr Flynn (62 Allen Street) asked whether Council would agree to full public consultation regarding any development on the Oval including the erection of buildings, the potential sale of any portion of the land, erection of signage and billboard additions and any other issues which affect amenity.

The Acting CEO outlined the forthcoming consultation processes that would form part of the preparation of the Recreation and Community Facilities Plan and the major review of its existing Strategic Community Plan.

Mayor O'Neill urged everyone to participate in this consultation to be part of the decision-making process.

- **Woodside Hospital Site**

Ms Rico (11 Petra Street) also expressed her concern regarding the proposed redevelopment of the Woodside Hospital site.

*Ms Rico moved, seconded Mrs Newton*

*That Council give consideration to the preparation of a report on the Woodside Hospital site with respect to its proposed development, zoning and preservation of buildings and significant trees.*

The Manager Planning Services outlined recent discussions with Landcorp regarding the site and the future R15 zoning application for the site. The main hospital building was heritage listed and would be retained and restored.



Mrs Newton advised that she supported the proposed motion as the community never seemed to know about developments around the Town until it was too late. Council needed to inform residents in the beginning, not when it was over.

The motion was put.

**Ms Rico moved, seconded Mrs Newton**

**That Council give consideration to the preparation of a report on the Woodside Hospital site with respect to its proposed development, zoning and preservation of buildings and significant trees.**

CARRIED

- ***Atom Stadium***

Mr Kane (33 Fortescue Street) noted the renaming of East Fremantle Oval to Atom Stadium and asked whether this sponsorship arrangement covered expenditure such as ground maintenance, water charges etc or did ratepayers still subsidise the football club.

The Acting CEO advised that under the existing lease arrangements Council covers the cost of all ground maintenance, with the football club paying a portion of its gate takings to Council. He believed last season this was approximately \$30,000. The annual maintenance costs were around \$100,000. The Town has subsidised the maintenance and operation of the East Fremantle Football Oval and surround by approximately \$100,000 per year over the last five years.

The proposed Recreation and Community Facilities Plan, informed by community consultation, would result in the development of policies to improve the equity of the Town's support for recreation and community groups.

- ***Leeuwin Barracks***

Ms Gillespie (47 Richmond Circus) sought an update on the Leeuwin Barracks site.

The Acting CEO outlined Council's ongoing discussions with the Department of Defence seeking to delay the impending sale of the site until a development Master Plan had been prepared. Although the Department had finally agreed to this course of action, Council was still awaiting confirmation that they would provide the required funding for this project.

Mrs Newton (45 Alexandra Road) asked whether any of the existing buildings were heritage listed.

The Acting CEO advised that a heritage survey would be a component of the Master Planning process.

- ***Kaleeya Hospital Redevelopment***

Ms Gillespie (47 Richmond Circus) sought an update on the former Kaleeya Hospital site.

The Manager Planning Services outlined the development proposal for aged care, additional medical consultancies and other uses which was currently before the DAP for consideration. The matter had been deferred pending clarification of the Hospital use under the Town Planning Scheme.

Following a question from Ms Gillespie, the Manager Planning Services suggested that the developers may consider the aged care use not viable should the other medical components not be approved.

- ***Old Royal George Hotel***

Ms Gillespie (47 Richmond Circus) sought an update on the old Royal George Hotel.

The Acting CEO advised that advice had been received that the state government would be making an announcement regarding the redevelopment of this building in the near future.

- ***Funding of Large Projects***



Mr Newton (45 Alexandra Road) commented that Council did not have the financial capacity, with its small rate base, to carry a large debt to facilitate the redevelopment of the Royal George Hotel or East Fremantle Oval.

Cr A McPhail remarked that Council's capacity to borrow large sums of money for projects was dependent on whether its ratepayers were prepared to pay higher rates.

Mr Cox (31 Dalgety Street) suggested Council set up a "future fund" to increase Council's reserves.

- **Town Hall Renovations**

Ms Rico (11 Petra Street) asked whether plans and costings for the internal modifications to the Town Hall had been approved by Council.

The Acting CEO advised that concept plans of the modifications had been prepared and cost estimates were currently being prepared by a quantity surveyor.

Mayor O'Neill highlighted the current unsatisfactory state of office accommodation, toilets, kitchen facilities and disabled access to the Town Hall and considered there could be no argument that major internal works were required to be carried out to improve the working conditions of Council staff and facilities for residents of the Town.

Mr Newton concurred with these comments.

**Ms Rico moved, seconded Mr Cox**

**That Council consider releasing plans and costings of the internal modifications to the Town Hall and seeking public comment on the proposal.** CARRIED 14:6

- **Parking and Noise Issues – May Street**

Ms England (34 May Street) drew attention to:

- dangerous traffic issues in May Street caused by parking either side for the length of the street and speeding traffic
- noise issues emanating from the Stirling Highway overpass which seems to ricochet off the Richmond Quarter building, since its unveiling (removal of scaffolding etc). She asked whether noise monitoring had taken place prior to the building development and whether Council would carry out future noise monitoring.

In response to a comment from Ms England that rangers' working hours had been reduced, the Executive Manager Finance & Administration advised that there had been no reduction in ranger staff hours.

The Acting CEO advised that it was difficult to assess a base level of parking demand prior to the completion of the Richmond Quarter. It was proposed that both residents and business owners would be consulted after the project was finished to help to develop a solution.

The Manager Planning Services advised that monitoring of traffic noise was a matter for the EPA. He had not been made aware of any perceived noise "bouncing" issue since the unveiling of the building.

Mayor O'Neill acknowledged the parking problem in May Street and assured residents it would be looked at once Richmond Quarter was completed. He considered the success of businesses like the May Street Larder had definitely contributed to the current problem.

- **Perth Freight Link**

Ms England (34 May Street) asked whether buildings such as the Royal George will be compromised by the construction of the proposed Perth Freight Link.



Mayor O'Neill advised that it was very concerning that Main Roads had provided no details in respect to the impact of noise or fumes on residents in the area. The noise from trucks' airbrakes had already been referred to Fremantle Ports and the Department of Transport.

Cr M McPhail advised given the wide road reserve along Stirling Highway it was unlikely any building would be compromised however the noise impact would be a serious problem.

The Acting CEO outlined the recent collaboration between the Town and the Cities of Fremantle, Cockburn and Kwinana for a media campaign seeking to direct state and federal funds to the development of the outer harbour.

Mrs Flynn (62 Allen Street), on behalf of the residents of the Town, commended Council for its work in opposing the Perth Freight Link, particularly with other local governments, and continued advocacy.

- **Email Communication**

Mrs Flynn (62 Allen Street) asked whether Council had considered using email as a form of communications with its residents for the distribution of information and newsletters.

The Acting CEO advised that Council had, on a number of occasions, invited residents to provide their email address for its database, with limited success. He considered it an efficient and cost effective form of communication and Council would continue to encourage residents to subscribe.

- **Engagement of Consultants**

Ms Rico (11 Petra Street) sought costings of consultants and special projects officers engaged by Council as opposed to staff carrying out work in-house.

The Acting CEO advised that he would take the question on notice. The Acting CEO advised that funding for consultants was allocated in Council's budget for specialised work outside the scope of Council officers. The employment of the Special Projects Officer, initially to assist with the proposed local government amalgamations, and then for a number of outstanding strategic, human resources and communications projects had been a great success.

- **Increasing Revenue Base**

Mr Bird (39 Gill Street) asked what Council was doing to increase its commercial and residential rate base.

*Cr Harrington left the meeting at 8.35pm.*

The Acting CEO advised that the development of Richmond Quarter with 125 additional dwellings was part of a strategy to meet the State Government's requirement for increased infill within the metropolitan area and provide increased rates revenue for the Town.

Mr Bird noted Council's decision to prevent infill in specific areas of the Town.

The Manager Planning Services advised that Mr Bird was referring to proposed Amendment 11 which proposes that a portion of the Richmond Precinct be rezoned from R12.5 to R17.5. This area has been identified as unsuitable for more intensive developments.

- **Fossil Fuel Divestment**

Mr Ounsworth (30 Moss Street) advised that following correspondence from 350.org requesting Council to avoid supporting fossil fuel industries by not investing in the big four banks, the Acting CEO had advised that the matter would be considered when Council's Investment Policy was reviewed. Mr Ounsworth asked when this review would take place.

The Acting CEO advised that with Council's limited staff resources, he could not advise when this Policy review and the research required to consider 350.org's request would take place.



Mr Ounsworth advised that the group had considerable experience in this area and he believed it would not require large staff resources to investigate the group's request.

Mayor O'Neill suggested it may be appropriate for a member of the group to make a presentation to Council's March or April Concept Forum. Mr Ounsworth advised he would await advice from Council regarding the date.

***Thankyou***

Mrs Newton (45 Alexandra Road) thanked elected members and staff for their efforts over the past year and made special thanks to Sue Limbert for her ongoing excellent service to the Town.

**CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

There being no other business Mayor O'Neill thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 8.50pm.